Open Your Eyes to LASIK

Tired of glasses or contacts? LASIK might be for you.

Since the FDA first approved LASIK for use in 1998, millions have decided it was the right choice for their vision correction. LASIK surgery offers individuals greater freedom from traditional corrective eyewear. In fact, over 40 million people in the U.S. are candidates for laser correction, and you may be one of them. If you’re considering LASIK, it’s important to understand what it is, what to expect and what factors make someone a good or poor candidate for the procedure.

Nearly a quarter million Americans undergo LASIK surgery every year.

What is LASIK?

LASIK (laser in situ keratomileusis) is the most advanced procedure in correcting nearsightedness and astigmatism. With LASIK, an ophthalmologist (a medical doctor who specializes in surgical treatment of the eyes) uses what is called an excimer laser to reshape the cornea at the front of the eye. This reshaping helps improve the way the eyes focus. During the procedure, the doctor first lifts a thin layer of the cornea to create a protective flap. The inner corneal tissue is gently reshaped and the flap is returned. The corneal flap protects the treated area, enabling faster healing.

Performed as outpatient surgery, LASIK usually takes between five and 15 minutes. However, patients should allow for about two hours on the day of their treatment. Prior to the procedure, eye-drop anesthesia is used to numb the eye, so no injections are necessary. Right after treatment, some patients have reported minor discomfort, similar to having an eyelash or a dry contact lens in their eye. You should not drive yourself home after the surgery, but most patients are able to go to work the next day. And you’ll be able to see the results of your LASIK treatment immediately, with better vision that continues to improve as your eyes heal and adjust to their new shape.

Is LASIK right for you?

If you’re over the age of 18 and have nearsightedness, farsightedness or astigmatism, you may be a good candidate for laser vision correction. Good LASIK candidates must:

• Be at least 18 years old
• Be in good general health
• Have no health issues affecting the eyes
• Have no active eye conditions that may affect healing
• Have a stable vision prescription for at least one year.

To learn more and to find an eye doctor in your area, visit: www.eyesiteonwellness.com
If you are pregnant or nursing, you shouldn’t consider LASIK at this time, because your refractive error may fluctuate. Also, LASIK does not treat presbyopia, the age-related vision problem that occurs in most individuals starting in their early 40s and can make reading more difficult.\(^3\) But if you’re like 40 million other Americans with LASIK-treatable vision problems, it may be time to talk to your eye doctor about the popular procedure that’s helped so many people see the world in a whole new way.

2. Ibid.
3. FDA U.S. Food & Drug Administration, 2011